

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 150

By Hardaway

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Cato Walker III of Memphis.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should honor the memory of a legendary entertainer, artist, and permanent fixture of American music, Cato Walker III; and

WHEREAS, an accomplished musician, manager, and promoter, Cato Walker III was an outstanding individual who helped cultivate nearly every area of Memphis music in a phenomenal career that spanned more than five decades; and

WHEREAS, Cato Walker III was raised to appreciate the value of music by his renowned family, his father, Cato Jr., and mother, Polly, were both longtime members of B.B. King's professional organization and, as a testament to his family's musical heritage, the Walkers have their own brass note marker proudly displayed on Beale Street; and

WHEREAS, Cato Walker III began making his mark on the music world serving as a saxophonist, band leader, and road manager for B.B. King during the late 1970s. The young prodigy also collaborated with musical greats such as Lou Rawls, The Bar-Kays, and J. Blackfoot; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Walker was the longtime vice president of development at Performa Entertainment Real Estate and was instrumental as one of the key, behind-the-scenes figures who worked for the revitalization of Beale Street as an entertainment destination; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Walker served with courage and an unfailing sense of duty in the United States Air Force; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Walker was also an extremely talented and compassionate educator who taught recording at the Kansas Vocational Technical Center, and he was also an adjunct professor at Memphis State University; and

WHEREAS, as a testament to his melodic ingenuity, he ran his own record label, Strick 9, and directed the careers of many contemporary Memphis musicians; and

WHEREAS, this remarkable gentleman also served on the Memphis and Shelby County Film, Television, and Music Commission; and

WHEREAS, a devoted family man, Cato Walker III will be sorely missed by his beloved wife, VanEsta Walker; his two sons, Tondtrict Dixon and Dietrich Dixon, his stepson, Ahmed Jenkins; his stepdaughter, Angela Cunningham; and his sisters, Lora Walker, Thelma Brim, and Joanna Brown; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Walker, his indelible influence on the music industry, and his significant contribution to the arts should be commemorated by this General Assembly; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Cato Walker III, reflecting fondly upon his artistry as a musician, his preeminence as a manager, and his status as a Memphis musical promoter.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Mr. Walker.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.